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ABSTRACT

Using grade distributions for fall semesters for odd-numbered years from 1955 to 1977, this study presents statistics on grading practices at Los Angeles City College. For each year in the day and evening divisions, the number of A, B, C, D, F, W (withdrawn), WP (failing at the time of withdrawal), WU (dropped for non-attendance), INC (incomplete), C (credit) and N/C (no credit) grades issued, total grades issued, total A, B, C, D, F grades issued and grade point averages (GPA) are presented. Additional tables and figures cover the number of grades per week enrollment for 1961-1977, GPAs by department for 1969, 1973 and 1977, and the number and percents of instructors and departments giving various grades for fall 1977. An examination of the statistical data reveals that more part-time students have enrolled in recent years, and that students are enrolling in more courses and withdrawing from the less attractive or more difficult ones. GPAs were higher for day students than evening students from 1955 to 1965, after which the reverse was true. Day student GPA dropped slightly from 1955 to 1965, then rose consistently to its highest level in 1977, when GPAs for both day and evening students were close to 2.7. Considered on the basis of total grades issued, there has been little change in the percentage of A and B grades over the past 23 years. (MB)

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LOS ANGELES CITY COLLEGE

"GRADING PATTERNS AT L.A.C.C. 1955-1977"

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Research Study #78-6

JC 780 472

Ben K. Gold
Office of Research
August 1978

"GRADING PATTERNS AT L.A.C.C. 1955-1977

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

One of the current concerns on college campuses today is evaluation--of methodologies, programs, teachers, students, administrators, communication vehicles, facilities, and every other aspect of the educational scene. The most traditional type of evaluation, that of teacher assigning letter grades to student, has in recent years been subjected to considerable philosophical scrutiny and to some very pragmatic experimentation.

This study was requested by the Office of Instruction to furnish some background information as to grading practices at L.A.C.C. and to identify any significant trends in those practices.

PROCEDURE OF THE STUDY

With the cooperation of the Office of Instruction and the Data Center, available records of grades given since 1955 were studied. Inasmuch as the historical data were found to be of varying format, decisions as to presentation of data in this study were based largely on availability. Grade distributions were found in consistent format for all Fall semesters for odd-numbered years. These distributions furnished the bulk of the information for the study. Additional information was obtained from Research Studies #70-10 and #77-14. Also, old L.A.C.C. catalogs furnished information as to changes in regulations concerned with grading.

FINDINGS

Grades of A,B,C,D,F, INC. have been issued at L.A.C.C. since 1955 (and before) with the traditional meaning of those grades. Grades for withdrawing students have undergone the following changes:

1955 - 1957, no grade recorded if student dropped before the first day of the ninth week. After that date either W - withdrawn, or UW - unofficial withdrawal.

1957 - 1964, no grade if withdrawal before the 1st day of the ninth week. After that date either W - withdrawn, WF - failing at the time of withdrawal, or WU - dropped for non-attendance.

1964 - 1969, no grade if withdrawal before the 1st day of the sixth week. After that date either W - withdrawn, or WF - failing at the time of withdrawal or dropped for non-attendance.

1969 - present, no grade if withdrawal before the 1st day of the sixth week. After that date, W - withdrawn.

1971 - present, Credit/No Credit grades permissible in selected courses.

INC, W, CR, and NCR grades are not included in figuring the student's grade point average, while UW, WU, and WF are figured as equivalent to F.*

Table 1 presents the numbers of grades given in each category listed above for Fall semesters of odd-numbered years for all day and evening enrolled students from 1955 to 1977. Figures in parentheses are percents based on the total day or evening for each semester. "Grade averages" are figured according to the college procedure: A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, F=0, WF=0. WU=0, UW=0. It should be noted that in these calculations, varying unit values among courses are disregarded.

*Prior to 1975, INC was counted as zero grade points, but since 1975 has not been included in GPA. This study does not include INC in GPA for any year.

Table 1a presents numbers and percents including grades A,B,C,D,F only. Table 1b relates number of grades to census week enrollment for the years 1961-1977.

Figures 1-5 present some of this data in graphical form. Figure 1 indicates the numbers of grades for each semester. Figure 1 includes all grades, Figure 1a includes only grades used in figuring GPA. Figure 1b shows number of grades per student. Figure 2 indicates "grade averages." Figure 3 indicates percent of passing withdrawal grades (i.e., W's). Figures 4 and 5 present percents of honor grades (A's and B's). Percents in Figure 4 are based on all grades given, while percents in Figure 5 are based on the total number of A,B,C,D, and F grades only.

Table 2 presents some statistics by department for 1969, 1973, and 1977 for all L.A.C.C. departments in existence during the nine year period. Day grades only are included in these statistics. Figures 6 and 7 present in graphical form comparison figures for 1969 and 1977 for % honor grades and % withdrawals for each department and also indicate the "all-departments" figures.

Figures 8 and 9 permit a more detailed look at some aspects of the Fall, 1977 grade distribution. Figure 8 shows the percents in each grade category for day and evening students. To give some indication of instructor variation in grading, Figure 9 shows the percent of day instructors who gave various percents (in 5% intervals) of A,B,C,D,F, and W grades. Instructors giving less than 50 grades were not included in this presentation. Also sketched on these same graphs are histograms showing departmental variations. Table 3 presents the data in tabular form.

TABLE 1 - Grades Given at L.A.C.C., Fall Semesters for Alternate Years, 1955-1977, Day and Evening Totals and Percents.

	A	B	C	D	F	WF	WU or UW	INC.	W	Total	Grade Average
Day F'55	4836 (14.6)	8683 (26.2)	11914 (35.9)	3048 (9.2)	1293 (3.9)	0 (0.0)	401 (1.2)	428 (1.3)	2574 (7.8)	33177 (100.0)	2.39
Evening	2518 (13.7)	3772 (24.0)	4480 (28.5)	1015 (6.5)	1241 (7.9)	0 (0.0)	1414 (9.0)	553 (3.5)	1070 (6.8)	15703 (100.0)	2.13
Day F'57	4626 (12.8)	9139 (25.3)	13060 (36.2)	3765 (10.4)	1996 (5.5)	0 (0.0)	768 (2.1)	452 (1.3)	2288 (6.3)	36094 (100.0)	2.27
Evening	1957 (12.3)	3636 (22.9)	4635 (29.2)	1149 (7.2)	1360 (8.6)	37 (0.2)	1645 (10.4)	572 (3.6)	860 (5.4)	15851 (100.0)	2.02
Day F'59	4004 (12.1)	8429 (25.5)	11881 (36.0)	3643 (11.0)	1943 (5.9)	71 (0.2)	956 (2.9)	568 (1.7)	1501 (4.5)	32996 (100.0)	2.22
Evening	1658 (11.2)	3085 (20.9)	4318 (29.2)	1232 (8.3)	1420 (9.6)	9 (0.1)	1224 (8.3)	588 (4.0)	1233 (8.4)	14767 (100.0)	2.20
Day F'61	3688 (11.6)	7711 (24.2)	11305 (35.6)	3661 (11.5)	2157 (6.8)	47 (0.1)	698 (2.2)	587 (1.8)	1993 (6.3)	31847 (100.0)	2.19
Evening	1670 (11.6)	2996 (20.9)	3981 (27.8)	1255 (8.8)	1458 (10.2)	39 (0.3)	1288 (9.0)	461 (3.2)	1192 (8.3)	14340 (100.0)	1.96
Day F'63	3578 (11.4)	7890 (25.1)	11265 (35.8)	3635 (11.5)	2030 (6.5)	45 (0.1)	889 (2.8)	539 (1.7)	1601 (5.1)	31472 (100.0)	2.19
Evening	1413 (12.5)	2615 (23.2)	3382 (30.0)	879 (7.8)	928 (8.2)	0 (0.0)	978 (8.7)	386 (3.4)	698 (6.2)	11279 (100.0)	2.07
Day F'65	4783 (11.8)	9293 (23.0)	12977 (32.1)	4594 (11.4)	3231 (8.0)	1320 (3.3)	0 (0.0)	782 (1.9)	3456 (8.5)	40436 (100.0)	2.14
Evening	1474 (12.0)	2714 (22.1)	3122 (25.4)	918 (7.5)	1058 (8.6)	752 (6.1)	0 (0.0)	362 (2.9)	1907 (15.5)	12307 (100.0)	2.11

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TABLE 1 - continued

	A	B	C	D	F	WF*	WU or UW*	INC.	W	Total	Grade Average
Day F'67	5452 (12.5)	9539 (21.9)	13680 (31.4)	4861 (11.2)	3227 (7.4)	1118 (2.6)	0 (0.0)	858 (2.0)	4775 (11.0)	43510 (100.0)	2.18
Evening	1866 (13.5)	3031 (22.0)	3525 (25.6)	915 (6.6)	710 (5.2)	593 (4.3)	0 (0.0)	342 (2.5)	2796 (20.3)	13778 (100.0)	2.30
Day F'69	6790 (15.6)	9767 (22.4)	12282 (28.2)	3458 (8.0)	2000 (4.6)	41 (0.1)	0 (0.0)	869 (2.0)	8285 (19.0)	43492 (100.0)	2.46
Evening	2158 (16.2)	3096 (23.4)	2961 (22.5)	635 (4.8)	360 (2.7)	23 (0.2)	0 (0.0)	344 (2.6)	3677 (27.6)	13254 (100.0)	2.65

	A	B	C	D	F	Credit**	No Credit**	INC.	W	Total	Grade Average
Day F'71	7156 (15.6)	9541 (20.8)	11544 (25.2)	3267 (7.1)	2334 (5.1)	89 (0.2)	51 (0.1)	937 (2.0)	10914 (23.8)	45833 (100.0)	2.47
Evening	2384 (17.5)	3122 (22.9)	3000 (22.0)	607 (4.4)	431 (3.2)	28 (2.4)	18 (0.1)	277 (2.0)	3791 (27.8)	13658 (100.0)	2.67
Day F'73	7053 (16.7)	8871 (21.0)	8718 (20.6)	2290 (5.4)	1859 (4.4)	125 (0.3)	27 (0.1)	1097 (2.6)	12196 (28.9)	42236 (100.0)	2.59
Evening	3100 (18.9)	3533 (21.5)	3085 (18.8)	640 (3.9)	312 (1.9)	25 (0.2)	6 (0.0)	396 (2.4)	5333 (32.5)	16430 (100.0)	2.79
Day F'75	8319 (15.4)	9081 (16.8)	9484 (17.5)	2736 (5.1)	1495 (2.8)	526 (1.0)	388 (0.7)	1074 (2.0)	20968 (38.8)	54071 (100.0)	2.64
Evening	3433 (15.3)	3818 (17.0)	3402 (15.2)	738 (3.3)	225 (1.0)	31 (0.1)	9 (0.0)	495 (2.2)	10297 (45.9)	22448 (100.0)	2.82
Day F'77	7763 (18.1)	8635 (20.1)	8591 (20.0)	2375 (5.5)	997 (2.3)	536 (1.2)	170 (0.4)	1070 (2.5)	12850 (29.9)	42987 (100.0)	2.70
Evening	2729 (17.6)	2999 (19.4)	2838 (18.3)	697 (4.5)	428 (2.8)	228 (1.5)	90 (0.6)	101 (0.7)	5374 (34.7)	15484 (100.0)	2.71

*WF and WU/UW grades were given to Fall 1969 only.
**Credit/No Credit grades were only given from Fall 1971.

TABLE 1a - Grade Distributions: A, B, C, D, F Only

		A	B	C	D	F	TOTAL
F'55	Day	4836	8683	11914	3048	1293	29774
		(16.2)	(29.2)	(40.0)	(10.2)	(4.3)	(100.0)
	Evening	2158	3772	4480	1015	1241	12666
		(17.0)	(29.8)	(35.4)	(8.0)	(9.8)	(100.0)
F'57	Day	4626	9139	13060	3765	1996	32586
		(14.2)	(28.0)	(40.1)	(11.6)	(6.1)	(100.0)
	Evening	1957	3636	4635	1149	1360	12737
		(15.4)	(28.5)	(36.4)	(9.0)	(10.7)	(100.0)
F'59	Day	4004	8429	11881	3643	1943	29900
		(13.4)	(28.2)	(39.7)	(12.2)	(6.5)	(100.0)
	Evening	1658	3085	4318	1232	1420	11713
		(14.2)	(26.3)	(36.9)	(10.5)	(12.1)	(100.0)
F'61	Day	3688	7711	11305	3661	2157	28522
		(12.9)	(27.0)	(39.6)	(12.8)	(7.6)	(100.0)
	Evening	1670	2996	3981	1255	1458	11360
		(14.7)	(26.4)	(35.0)	(11.0)	(12.8)	(100.0)
F'63	Day	3578	7890	11265	3635	2030	28398
		(12.6)	(27.8)	(39.7)	(12.8)	(7.1)	(100.0)
	Evening	1413	2615	3382	879	928	9217
		(15.3)	(28.4)	(36.7)	(9.5)	(10.1)	(100.0)
F'65	Day	4783	9293	12977	4594	3231	34878
		(13.7)	(26.6)	(37.2)	(13.2)	(9.3)	(100.0)
	Evening	1474	2714	3122	918	1058	9286
		(15.9)	(29.2)	(33.6)	(9.9)	(11.4)	(100.0)
F'67	Day	5452	9539	13680	4861	3227	36759
		(14.8)	(26.0)	(37.2)	(13.2)	(8.8)	(100.0)
	Evening	1866	3031	3525	915	710	10047
		(18.6)	(30.2)	(35.1)	(9.1)	(7.1)	(100.0)
F'69	Day	6790	9767	12282	3458	2049	34346
		(19.8)	(28.4)	(35.8)	(10.1)	(6.0)	(100.0)
	Evening	2158	3096	2961	635	360	9210
		(23.4)	(33.6)	(32.1)	(6.9)	(3.9)	(100.0)
F'71	Day	7156	9541	11544	3267	2334	33842
		(21.1)	(28.2)	(34.1)	(9.7)	(6.9)	(100.0)
	Evening	2384	3172	3000	607	431	9594
		(24.8)	(33.1)	(31.3)	(6.3)	(4.5)	(100.0)

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TABLE 1a (continued)

		A	B	C	D	F	TOTAL
F'73	Day	7053	8871	8718	2290	1859	28791
		(24.5)	(30.8)	(30.3)	(7.9)	(6.5)	(100.0)
	Evening	3100	3533	3085	640	312	10670
		(29.1)	(33.1)	(28.9)	(6.0)	(2.9)	(100.0)
F'75	Day	8319	9081	9484	2736	1495	31115
		(26.7)	(29.2)	(30.5)	(8.8)	(4.8)	(100.0)
	Evening	3433	3818	3402	738	225	11616
		(29.6)	(32.9)	(29.3)	(6.4)	(1.9)	(100.0)
F'77	Day	7763	8635	8591	2375	997	28361
		(27.4)	(30.4)	(30.3)	(8.4)	(3.5)	(100.0)
	Evening	2729	2999	2838	697	428	9691
		(28.2)	(30.9)	(29.3)	(7.2)	(4.4)	(100.0)

TABLE 1b - Number of Grades Per census Week Enrollment, 1961-77

	DAY					EVENING				
	(A) Enrollment	(B) No. of Grades (all)	(B÷A) Grades ÷Enr	(C) No. of Grades (ABCDF only)	(C÷A) Grades ÷Enr	(A) Enrollment	(B) No. of grades (all)	(B÷A) Grades ÷ Enr	(C) No. of Grades (ABCDF only)	(C÷A) Grades ÷ Enr
F'61	8003	31847	3.98	28522	3.56	9910	14340	1.45	11360	1.15
F'63	8152	31472	3.86	28398	3.48	8089	11279	1.39	9217	1.14
F'65	8127	40436	4.98	34878	4.29	7349	12307	1.68	9286	1.26
F'67	10233	43510	4.25	36759	3.59	7904	13778	1.74	10047	1.27
F'69	10323	43492	4.21	34346	3.33	7140	13254	1.86	9210	1.29
F'71	11497	45833	3.99	33842	2.94	6305	13658	2.17	9594	1.52
F'73	11847	42236	3.56	28791	2.43	7338	16430	2.24	10670	1.45
F'75	15220	54071	3.55	31115	2.04	8684	22448	2.58	11616	1.34
F'77	12678	42987	3.39	28361	2.24	6857	15484	2.26	9691	1.41

TABLE 2 - Grade Averages by Department
(Day Only)

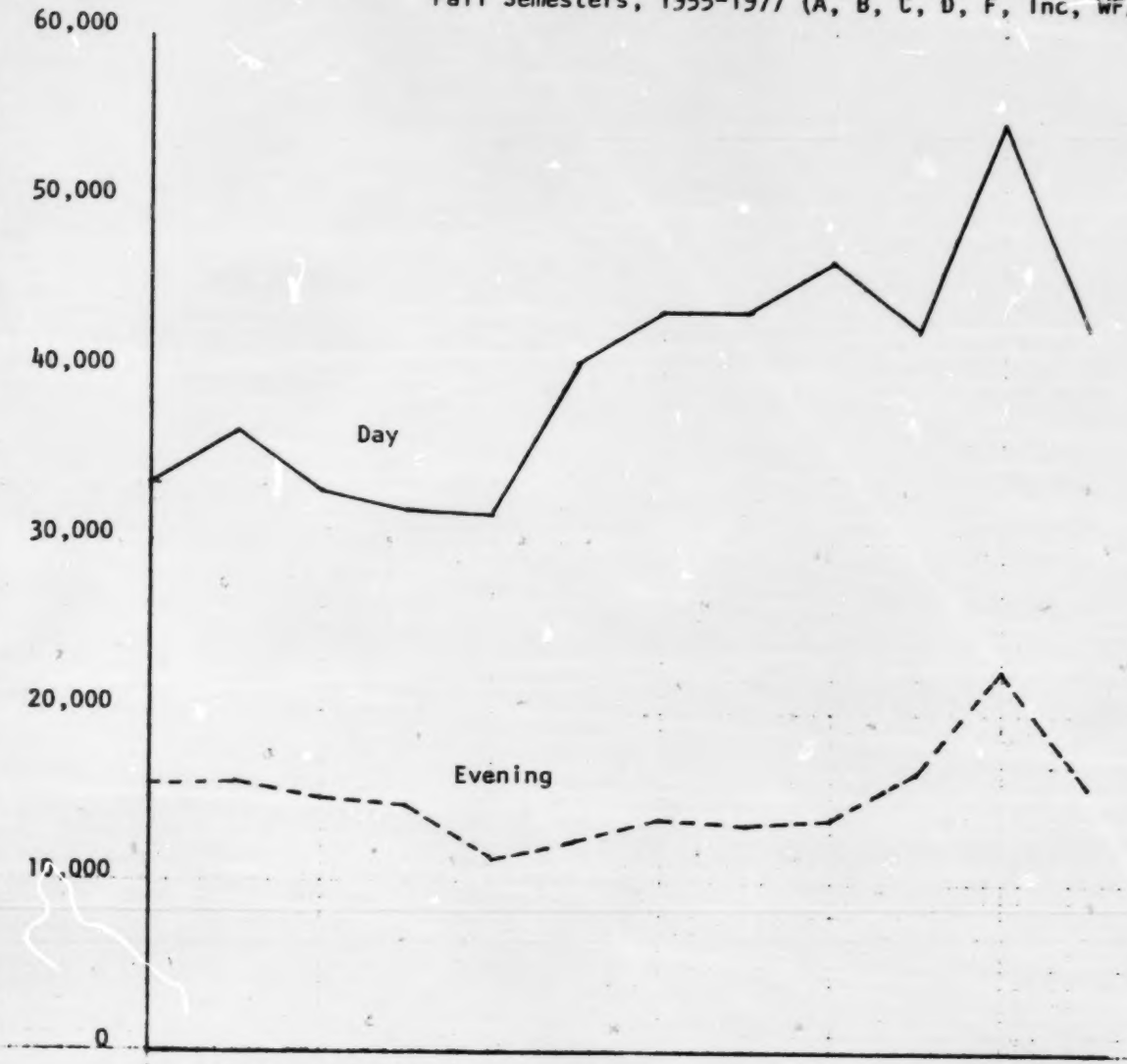
	F'69			F'73			F'77		
	No. of Grades	%W's	GPA*	No. of Grades	%W's	GPA	No. of Grades	%W's	GPA
American Cultures	585	31%	2.81	871	29%	2.75	480	37%	2.70
Architecture	292	13%	2.24	294	19%	2.55	230	26%	2.16
Art	1238	21%	2.60	1216	29%	2.89	660	35%	2.95
Business Administration	2180	18%	2.47	1807	31%	2.33	1146	39%	2.67
Chemistry	539	33%	1.95	607	40%	2.34	293	53%	2.33
Co Tech	918	22%	2.67	589	33%	2.78	426	40%	2.74
Dental	818	9%	2.50	1041	9%	2.77	774	8%	2.84
Developmental Commun.	288	25%	2.27	380	32%	2.54	710	27%	2.39
Earth Sciences	1628	15%	2.20	1455	29%	2.56	705	29%	2.27
Engineering	477	15%	2.47	251	27%	3.21	167	24%	3.22
English	3150	23%	2.22	2833	43%	2.41	1785	35%	2.53
Family & Consumer Studies	717	11%	2.66	1049	21%	3.05	735	28%	2.94
Foreign Languages	1545	19%	2.74	1118	33%	2.93	971	32%	2.74
Law	1023	20%	2.76	1860	19%	2.90	807	30%	2.83
Life Sciences	1291	17%	2.18	1376	26%	2.27	909	30%	2.32
Math	2369	32%	2.38	2164	40%	2.60	1312	38%	2.64
Media Arts	385	17%	2.86	589	35%	3.01	398	30%	2.82
Music	1989	21%	2.70	2060	35%	2.78	1817	31%	2.78
Nursing	342	8%	2.40	498	10%	2.68	994	6%	2.87
Occupational Therapy	95	13%	2.59	168	20%	2.78	135	9%	2.70
Ophthalmic Optics	40	25%	2.57	131	16%	2.82	114	13%	2.59
Philosophy	932	19%	2.76	657	31%	2.99	276	36%	2.97
PE (Men & Women)	7905	12%	2.43	7072	17%	2.38	5240	25%	2.89
Physics	614	27%	2.21	487	34%	2.41	295	28%	2.61
Psychology	2413	22%	2.68	2906	33%	2.81	1408	23%	2.80
Radio-TV-Film	910	22%	2.74	1073	40%	2.98	162	32%	2.97
Rad Tech	164	14%	2.78	493	18%	2.79	853	10%	2.58
Secretarial Science	1407	14%	2.37	1483	33%	2.60	1120	38%	2.70
Social Sciences	4461	21%	2.17	3088	35%	2.16	1638	34%	2.17
Speech	1309	19%	2.60	1200	32%	2.60	846	29%	2.58
Theatre	1274	21%	2.85	1197	29%	2.94	785	21%	3.08
Transportation	194	5%	2.43	223	18%	2.61	198	13%	2.72
TOTALS	43492	19%	2.46	42236	29%	2.59	42988	30%	2.70

*GPA based on A to F and WF/WU only (INC not included)

TABLE 3 - Numbers and Percents of Instructors (N=320) and Departments (N=32), Giving Various Grades, Fall, 1977, Day Only

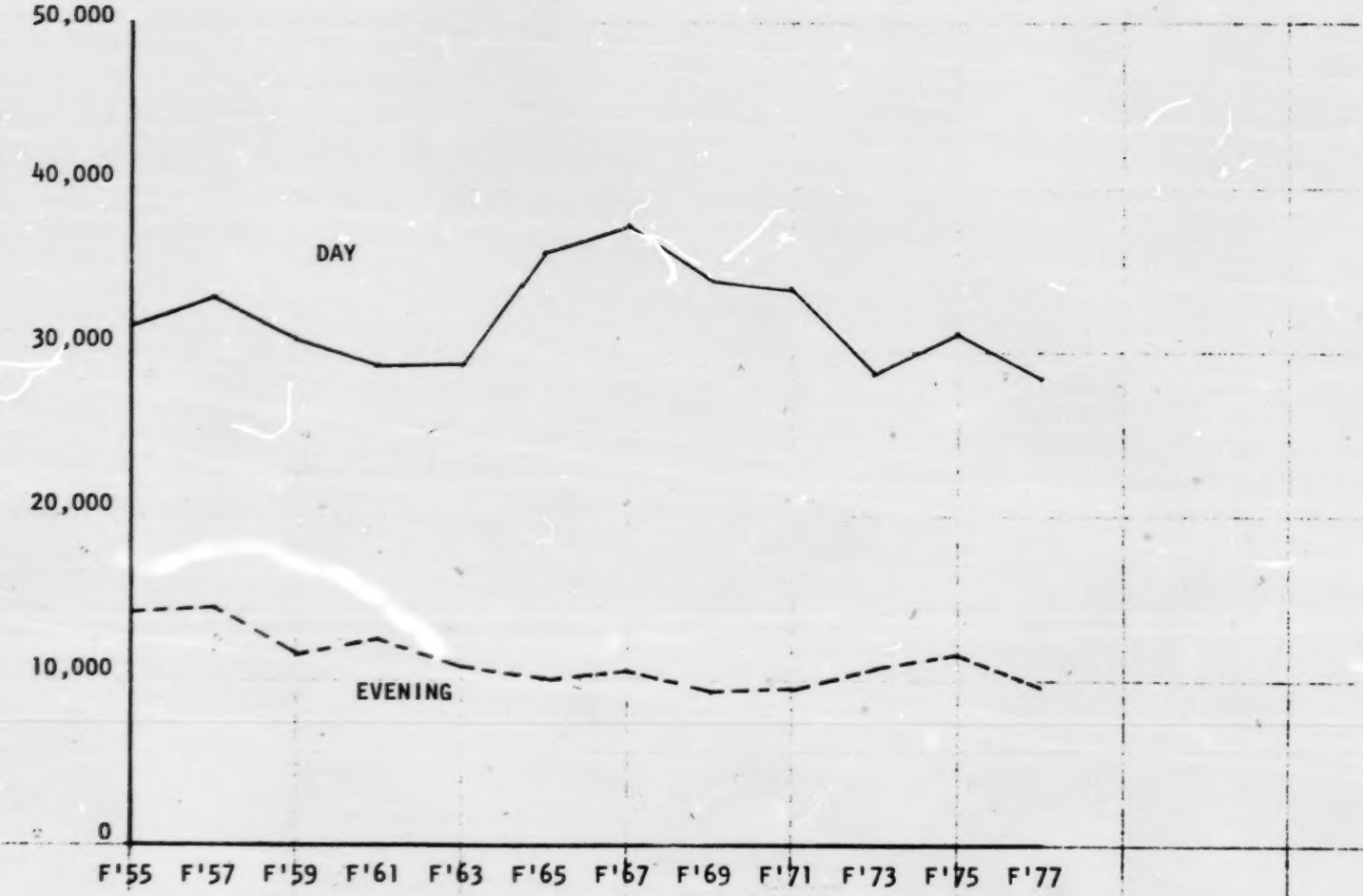
%	A		B		C		D		F		W	
	Inst.	Dept.	Inst.	Dept.	Inst.	Dept.	Inst.	Dept.	Inst.	Dept.	Inst.	Dept.
85+	1 (0.3)											
80+												
75+											1 (0.3)	
70+			1 (0.3)									
65+											3 (0.9)	
60+	2 (0.6)										1 (0.3)	
55+			1 (0.3)		1 (0.3)						6 (1.9)	
50+	2 (0.6)		1 (0.3)								12 (3.8)	1 (3.1)
45+	1 (0.3)		2 (0.6)		2 (0.6)						14 (4.4)	
40+	6 (1.9)		3 (0.9)		10 (3.1)						32 (10.0)	
35+	11 (3.4)		11 (3.4)	1 (3.1)	12 (3.8)	1 (3.1)					41 (12.8)	6 (18.8)
30+	20 (6.3)	2 (6.3)	24 (7.5)	4 (12.5)	26 (8.1)	3 (9.4)	1 (0.3)		1 (0.3)		53 (16.6)	7 (21.9)
25+	22 (6.9)	2 (6.3)	31 (9.7)	2 (6.3)	45 (14.1)	6 (18.8)	5 (1.6)		1 (0.3)		49 (15.3)	8 (25.0)
20+	38 (11.9)	6 (18.8)	66 (20.6)	11 (34.4)	60 (18.8)	4 (12.5)	4 (1.3		2 (0.6)		36 (11.3)	4 (12.5)
15+	53 (16.6)	12 (37.5)	87 (27.2)	12 (37.5)	75 (23.4)	15 (46.9)	14 (4.4		3 (0.9)		24 (7.5)	
10+	72 (22.5)	7 (21.9)	58 (18.1)	2 (6.3)	57 (17.8)	2 (6.3)	31 (9.7)	4 (12.5)	12 (3.8)	1 (3.1)	20 (6.3)	3 (9.4)
5+	58 (18.1)	3 (9.4)	28 (8.8)		26 (8.1)	1 (3.1)	102 (31.9)	12 (37.5)	35 (10.9)	1 (3.1)	18 (5.6)	3 (9.4)
0+	34 (10.6)		7 (2.2)		6 (1.9)		163 (50.9)	16 (50.0)	266 (83.1)	30 (93.8)	10 (3.1)	
Median												
F'77	(14.7)	(17.5)	(18.8)	(20.9)	(19.7)	(19.3)	(4.9)	(5.0)	(3.0)	(2.7)	(30.3)	(23.0)
F'69	(13.8)	(14.2)	(26.7)	(28.8)	(32.4)	(36.4)	(9.0)	(8.5)	(3.7)	(3.5)	(18.1)	(20.4)

FIGURE 1 - Number of Grades Given at L.A.C.C., Alternate Fall Semesters, 1955-1977 (A, B, C, D, F, Inc, WF/WU*, W, Cr/No Cr**)



*WF/WU given F'55 to F'69 only
**Credit/No Credit given F'71 to F'77 only

FIGURE 1a - No. of Grades Given at L.A.C.C.,
(A, B, C, D, F, WF/WU* only)
Alternate Fall Semesters, 1955-1977



*WF/WU given from F'55 to F'69 only

FIGURE 1b - Grades per Enrollment

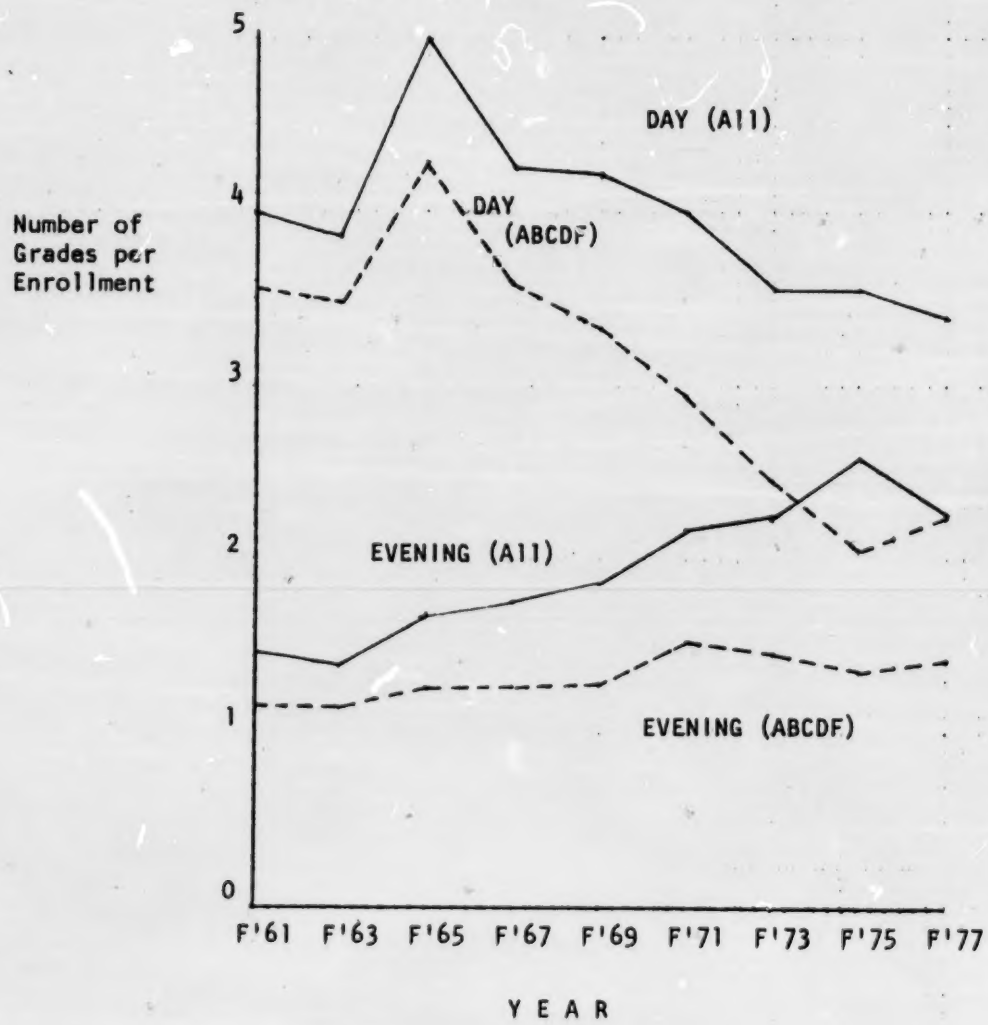
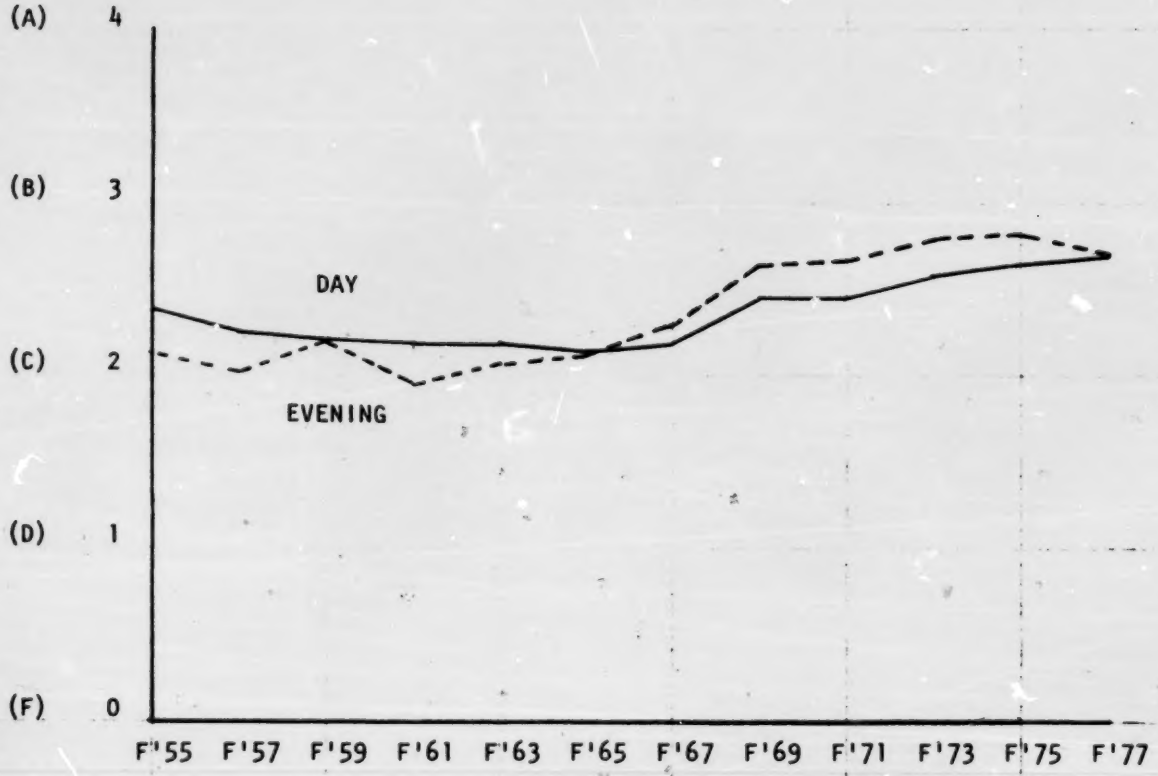


FIGURE 2 - L.A.C.C. Grade Averages* Alternate Fall Semesters 1955-1977



*Grade averages based on A to F and WF/WU only (INC not included)

FIGURE 3 - % Passing Withdrawals (W), Based on Total Grades Given at L.A.C.C., 1955-1977 Day (———) and Evening (- - -).

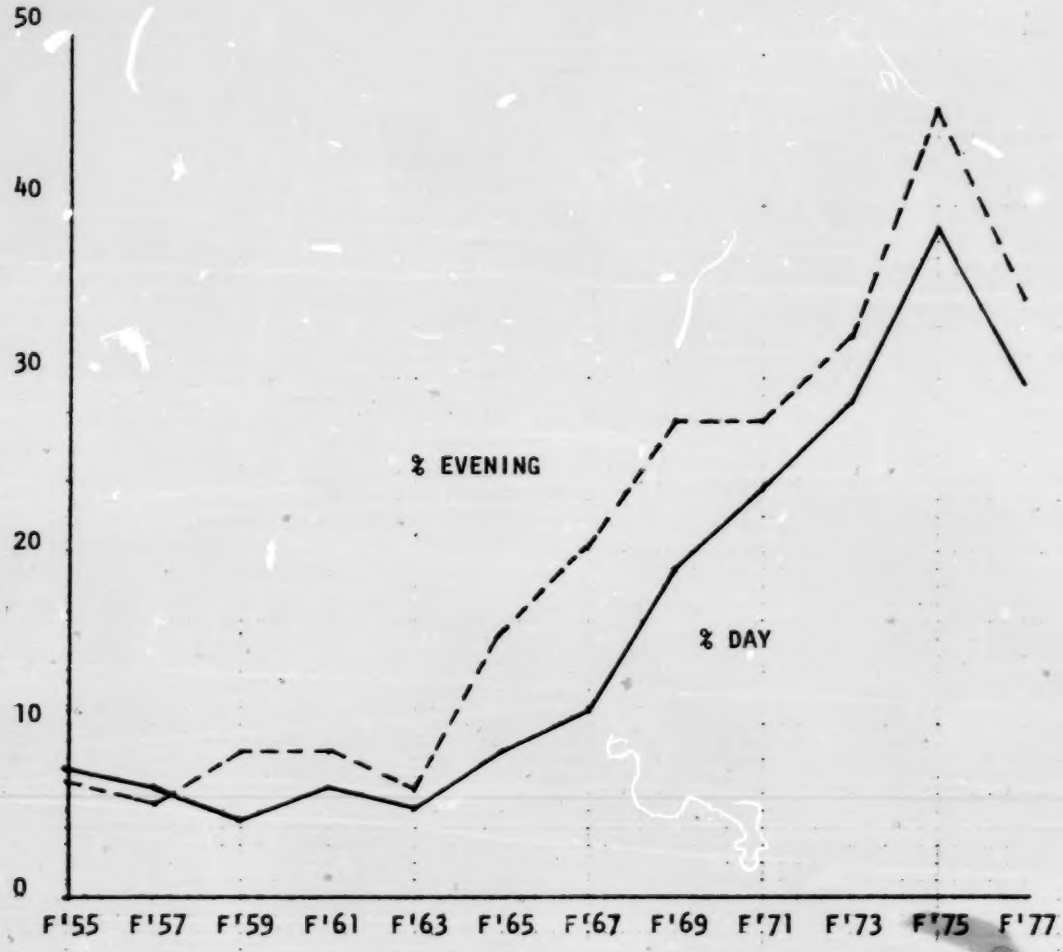


FIGURE 4 - % A and B Grades, Based on All Grades Given at L.A.C.C., 1955-1977

(Day ———— —)
(Evening ------)

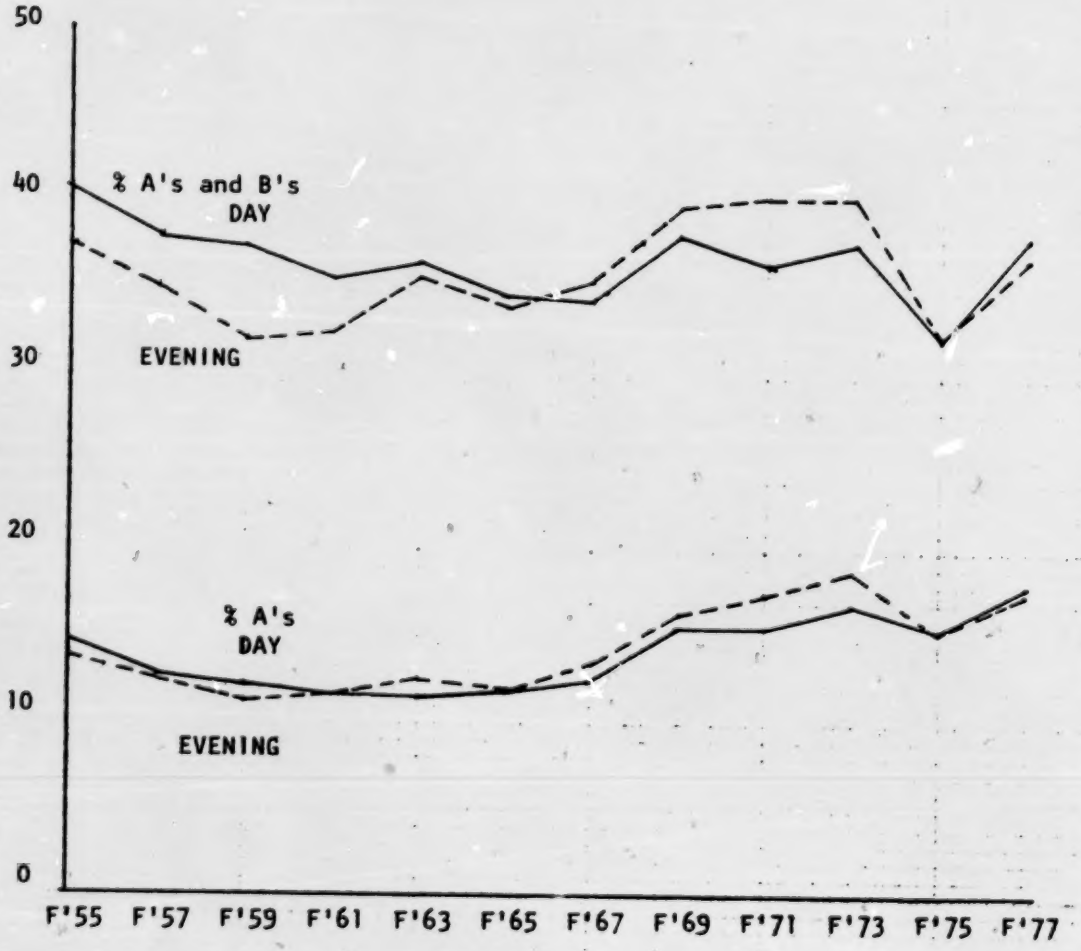


FIGURE 5 - % A and B Grades, Based on A, B, C, D, F Grades Only, at L.A.C.C., 1955-1977

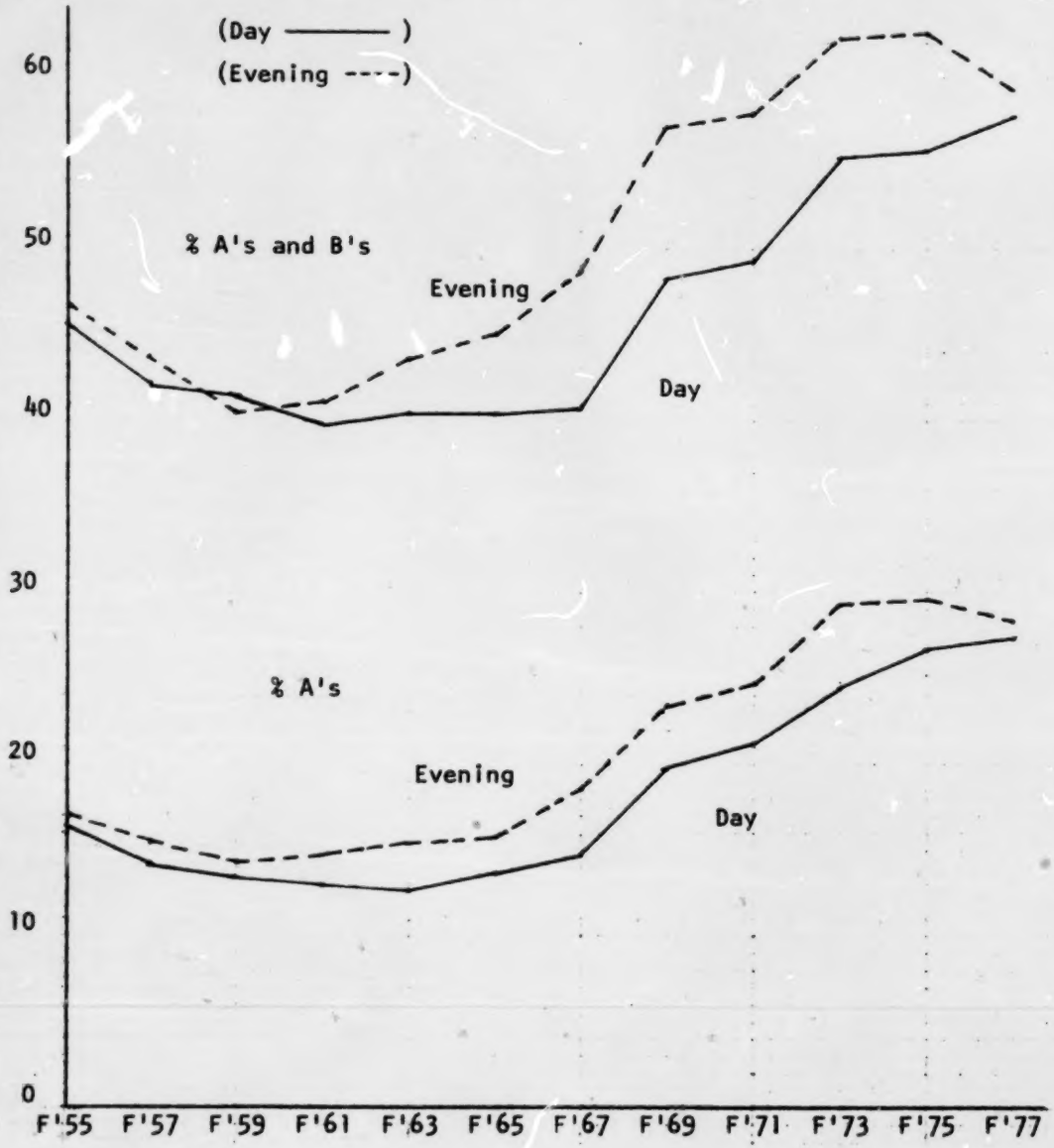


FIGURE 6 - Distribution of A and B Grades by Department
(% of A to F grades only) for Fall 1977 and Fall 1969

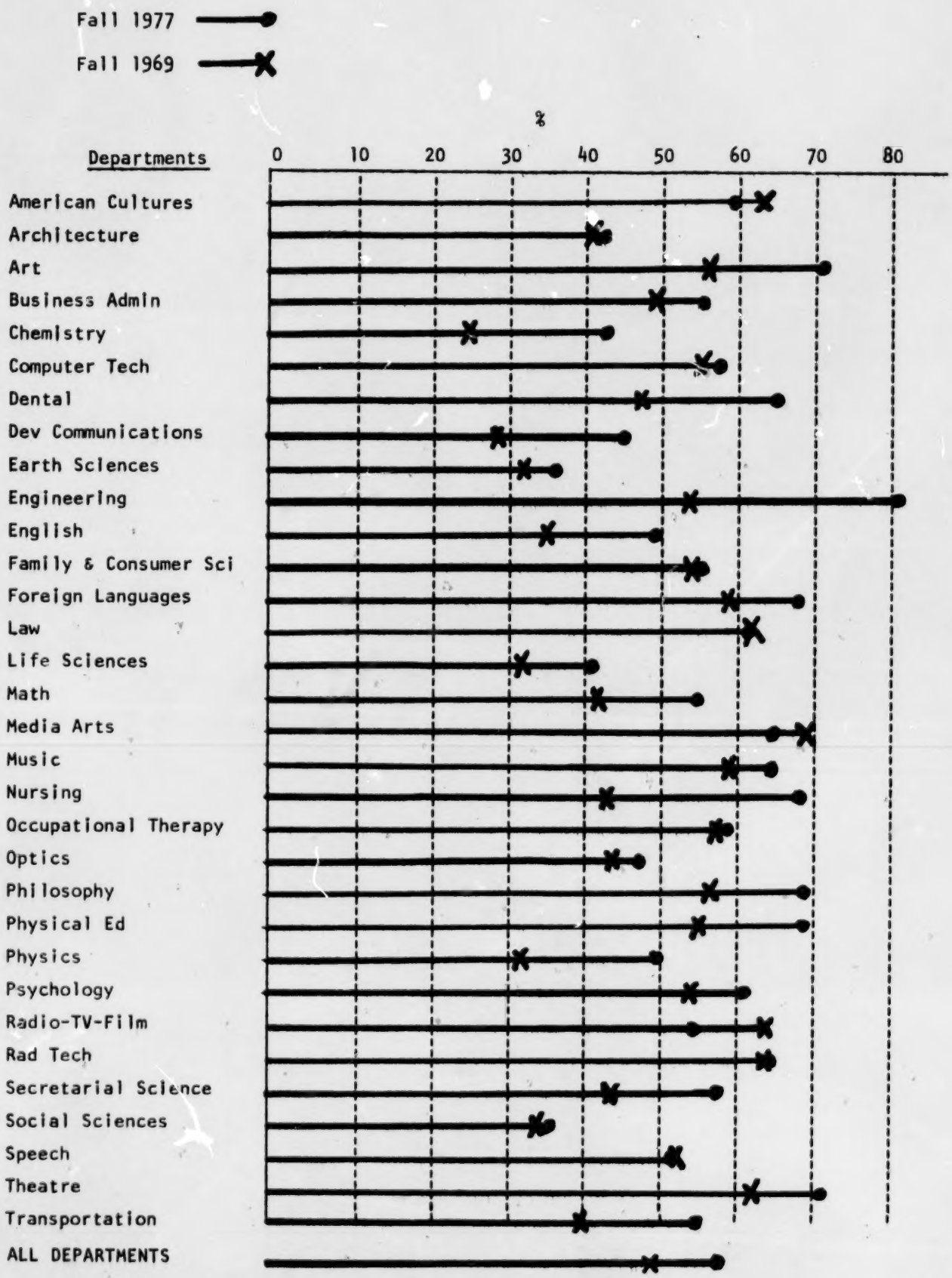


FIGURE 7 - Distribution of W Grades (in %) by Department for Fall 1977 and Fall 1969

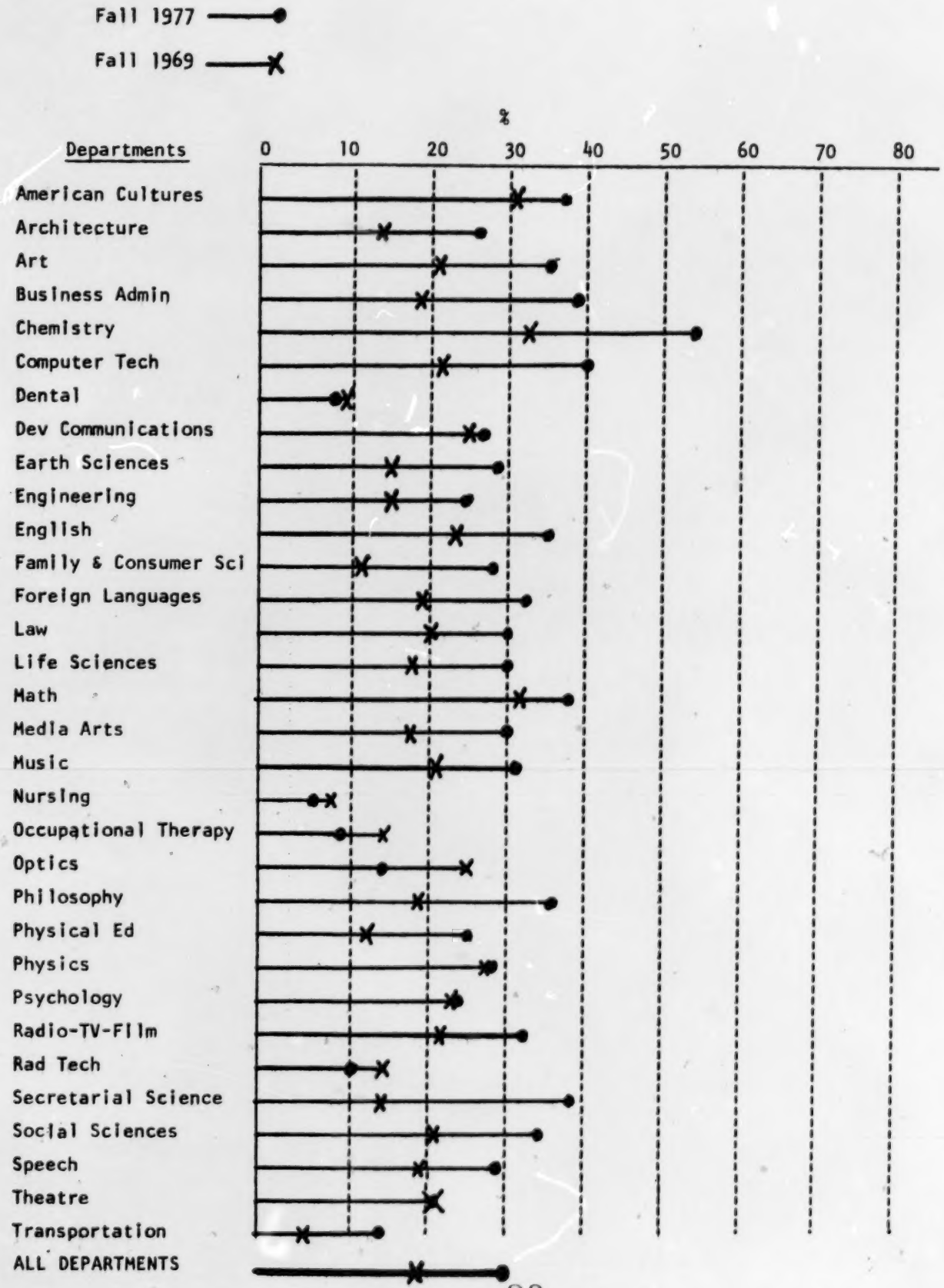
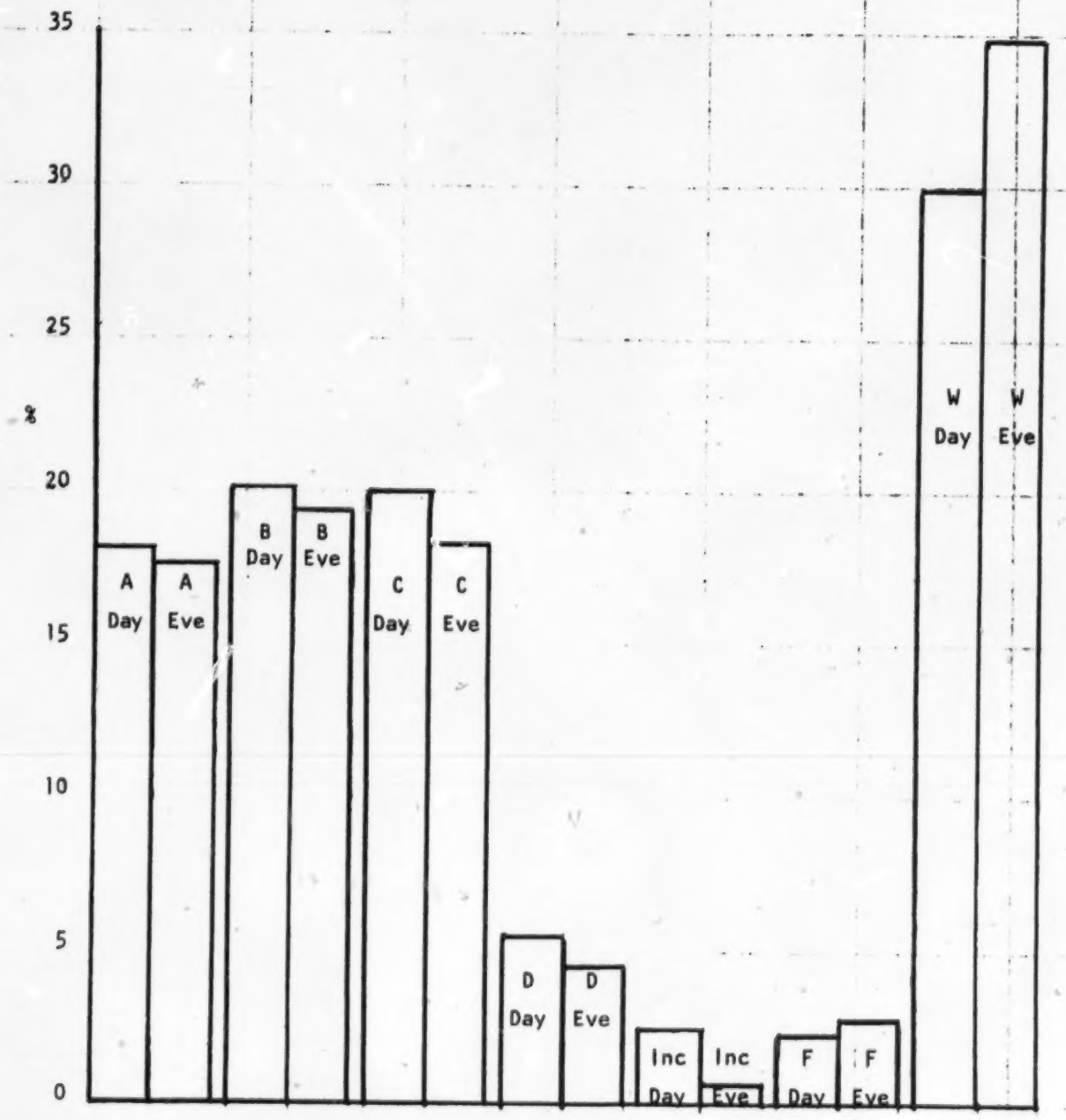


FIGURE 8 - Day and Evening LACC Grade Distributions, Fall 1977



Day: N = 42,987, Average grade 2.70
Evening: N = 15,484, Average grade 2.71

FIGURE 9 - Distribution of Fall 1977 Grades by Instructors (N=320* shaded areas) and by Departments (N=32)

*Instructors giving less than 50 grades not included.

(Day only)

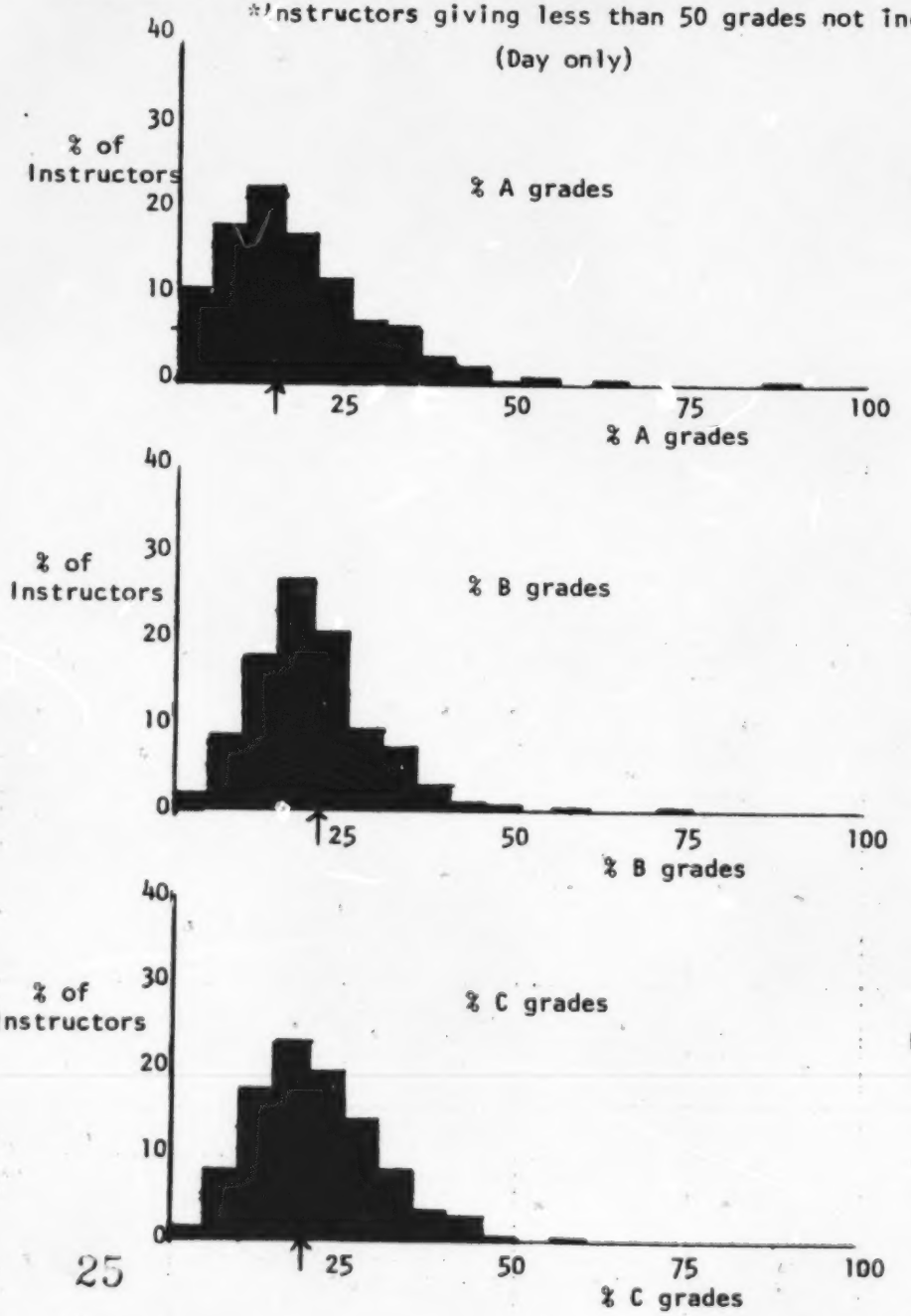
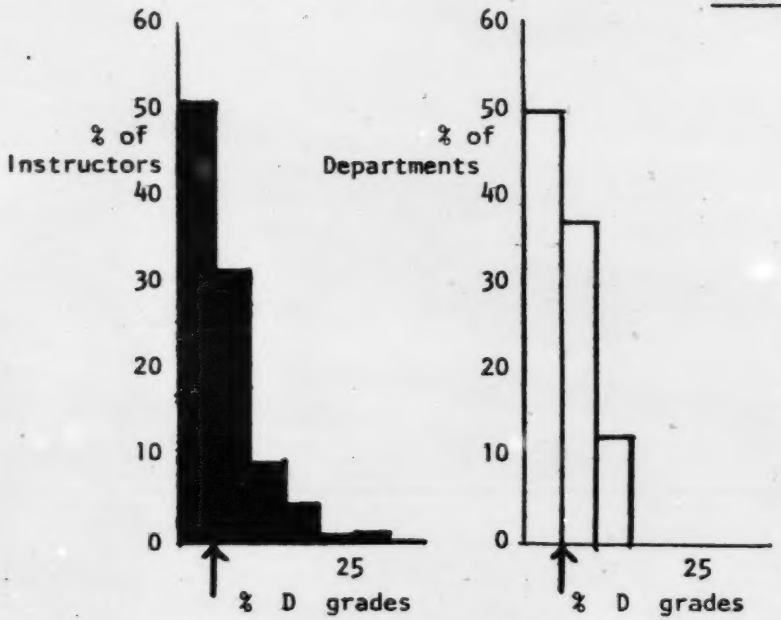
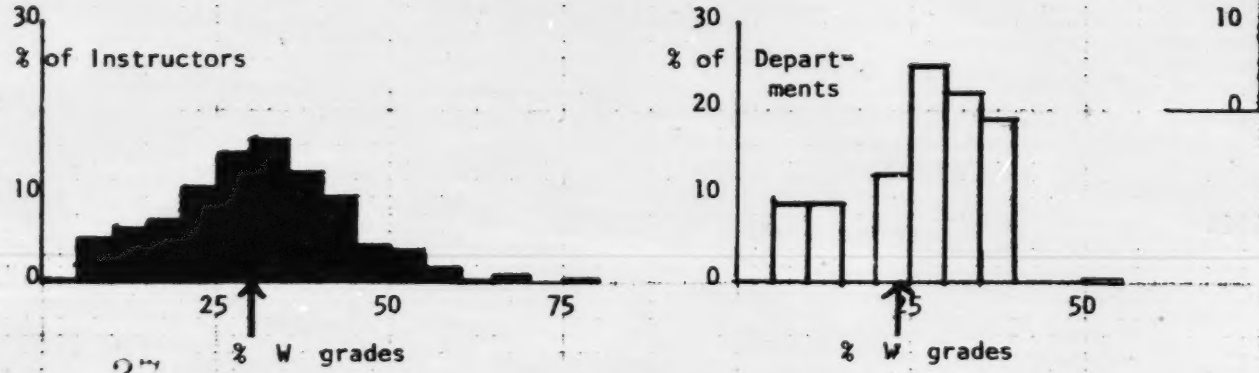
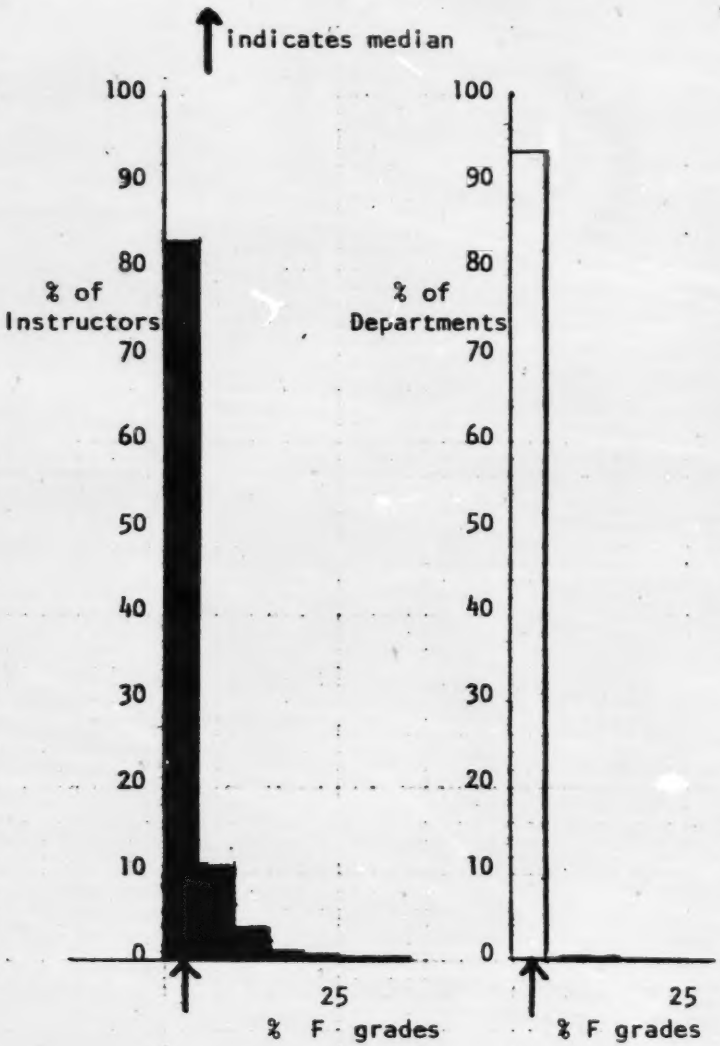


FIGURE 9 - Distribution by Instructors and Departments (Day only)
(continued)







DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study presents some statistics concerning grading practices at Los Angeles City College over the past twenty three years. Total number of grades per semester ranged from 31,000 to 54,000 for the day division and 11,000 to 22,000 for the evening division.

After remaining relatively constant during the fifties, the number of day grades issued rose dramatically during the sixties, increasing about 60% during that period with a considerably smaller increase shown for evening students. Evening has increased slightly in the seventies, day has decreased slightly*. The impact of extended use of W grades in recent years can be seen by looking at total number of A,B,C,D,F grades only and the number of grades given per student. Number of total day grades per student is fairly stable over the period from 1961 to 1977, while the ratio using A,B,C,D,F grades only drops significantly. The latter confirms other evidence that more part-time day students have enrolled in recent years, but the former suggests that they are enrolling in more courses and withdrawing from the less attractive or more difficult ones. This pattern is evidenced also by evening students, although the percent of part-timers in the evening remains constant (almost all).

When considering overall "grade average" it can be noted that day averages were higher than evening from 1955 to 1965, with the reverse being true after 1965. Day average dropped slightly but consistently over that ten year interval then rose consistently to its highest level in 1977. Evening average, significantly below the day average from 1955 to 1961, stayed at about the same level

*an exception is Fall 1975, which is atypical due to inclusion of some special off-campus courses, notably one for over 2000 firemen.

until 1965, then rose steadily until 1973, after which time it remained relatively constant.

In Fall 1977, grade averages for both day and evening were both close to 2.70. Extremes for day averages were 2.14 in Fall 1965 and 2.70 in Fall 1977; extremes for evening averages were 1.96 in Fall 1961 and 2.82 in Fall 1975.

Consideration of withdrawal grades reveals some striking changes, related to changes in procedure, which at least partially explain the uptrend in grade average mentioned above. With the discontinuance of the WU grade in 1964 and the concurrent change in drop deadline from 8th to 5th week, the percent of W grades rose sharply, especially in the evening division. This rise was further enhanced in 1969 with the removal of the WF grade. Percent of W grades in the seventies is about triple that in the fifties and early sixties.

A consideration of A and B grades over the fifteen year period is offered from two perspectives: (1) including all grades as the base for percent, and (2) including A,B,C,D,F grades only. Considered on the basis of total grades issued, there has been little change in percent of A and B grades over the past twenty three years. Removing withdrawal and incomplete grades from the total, however, indicates that the percent of honor grades has risen from about 40% in the fifties and sixties to current figures of about 60%. These facts must of course be considered in conjunction with the changes in grading procedures indicated above.

An analysis of grade averages by departments for the years 1969, 1973, 1977 shows a general consistency of grading patterns within departments. Fifteen of the 32 departments were above the all-day average for all three years and eight were below it for

all three years. Four departments ranked in the top ten for all three years: Law, Philosophy, Radio-TV-Film, and Theatre. Seven departments ranked in the bottom ten all three years: Architecture, Chemistry, Developmental Communications, Earth Science, English, Life Sciences, Social Sciences.

With some exceptions it appears that the traditionally academic departments grade lower on the average than the departments specializing in occupational majors. In Fall, 1977 GPA's of departments ranged from 2.16 to 3.22 and percentages of W grades ranged from 6% to 53%.

Wide variation can be noted in grades issued by individual instructors. For example, for instructors who issued 50 or more grades in Fall 1977, the percent of A's given ranged from below 5% to over 85%, B's from 5% to 75%, C's from 5% to 60%, D's from 0 to 30%, F's from 0 to 35%, and W's from 0 to over 75%.

RECOMMENDATION

This study makes no attempt to assess the merits of grading practices of individuals, departments, or the college as a whole. It is recommended, however, that individual faculty members and departments review their grading policies in the light of the information presented in this report and in the context of current educational and sociological concerns.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

OCT 3 1978

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